levels. There is no proposal for establishing of KVK in Nizamabad and Khamam districts at present.

Special cell for HP apple farmers

†3522. SHRI ANIL SHARMA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to form a special cell for the farmers of Himachal Pradesh to provide them fair price of apples so that they are protected from private institutions; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI AJIT SINGH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Question does not arise.

Impact of import of edible oils

3523. SHRI KHAGEN DAS: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the shifting of palm oil to open licence category and the reduction of its import duty from 25 per cent to 15 per cent have resulted in increase in the import of edible oils, including palm oil;

(b) whether the proposed import of 70 million of palm oil from Malaysia would also destroy the coconut farming, especially in Kerala;

(c) if so, the steps being taken by Government on both the issues; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI AJIT SINGH): (a) Following are the reasons for increase in the import of edible oils including palm oil:—

(i) Bringing the import of edible oil including palm oil under Open General Licence (OGL).

(ii) Drastic decline in the international prices of edible oils including palm oil.

(iii) Successive reduction in import duties from 65% in 1994 to 15% in July, 1998.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.